

## ***FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** May 22, 2014

**Agenda Item:** Avista Cooperative Management Area

**Division/Bureau:** Wildlife

**Action Needed:** Proposed

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 10 minutes

### **Background**

This proposal would establish for two years, through F&W Commission rule, a Cooperative Management Area on Avista Corporation property in Sanders County. These rules are currently covered under a special circumstances agreement through Block Management and have been in effect for about seven years. However, the Block Management program is a hunting access program and there is a need for a Commission rule to ensure recreational use rules can be enforced during times when no hunting seasons are in effect. Avista does not accept any monetary payment through Block Management. In return, Avista asks FWP to enforce these regulations on their property. This is a recreational area heavily used by the public along the Clark Fork River near Thompson Falls. The Cooperative Management Agreement rules would provide for managed public access for camping, fishing, hunting, boating and other outdoor activities during parts of the year that fall outside of the general fall hunting season. Several other Avista properties would still remain in the Block Management program for hunting.

### **Public Involvement Process & Results**

These rules are not new to Avista Corporation property and have been previously covered under Block Management. A public process will be initiated if the proposal is approved for public comment.

### **Alternatives and Analysis**

Without adoption of this proposal, FWP would continue to operate under a special circumstances agreement. Enforcement efforts could be hampered if violators cannot be prosecuted outside of hunting season, potentially resulting in decreased access on Avista lands in Sanders County.

### **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP proposes the Commission approve this tentative rule. This rule will result in continued free public access on Avista lands year round.

### **Proposed Motion**

I move the F&W Commission adopt the proposed Avista Cooperative Management Area Biennial Rule.